

STATE OF MINNESOTA
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
FOR THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the Matter of CenterPoint Energy's
Implementation of the Cold Weather
Rule and Reconnection Policies

FOURTH PREHEARING ORDER

This matter came on for a telephone prehearing conference before Administrative Law Judge Kathleen D. Sheehy on March 15, 2006.

Steven H. Alpert, Assistant Attorney General, 445 Minnesota Street, Suite 900, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101, appeared on behalf of the Residential and Small Business Utilities Division of the Office of the Attorney General (OAG-RUD).

Eric F. Swanson, Esq., Winthrop & Weinstine, PA, 225 South Sixth Street, Suite 3500, Minneapolis, MN 55402-4269, appeared for CenterPoint Energy.

Pam Marshall, Executive Director, Energy CENTS Coalition, 823 East Seventh Street, St. Paul, MN 55106, appeared on behalf of the organization (ECC).

Kate Kahlert appeared for the Public Utilities Commission's Consumer Affairs Office (CAO).

Based on the discussions during the prehearing conference, and all of the files and proceedings, the Administrative Law Judge makes the following:

ORDER

1. CenterPoint Energy and the OAG-RUD are still in the process of finalizing their agreement to resolve issues concerning individualized relief in the class action litigation in U.S. District Court. They anticipate that the federal court may grant preliminary approval of the agreement within the next month, at which point notice will be mailed to class members outlining the terms of the agreement. At this time CenterPoint Energy and the OAG-RUD will be able to provide the basic details of the agreement to ECC and Commission staff; however, the agreement concerning resolution of penalties by the Commission would not be made public until 60 to 90 days later, after the federal court has granted final approval of the terms concerning individualized relief.

2. After ECC has had an opportunity to review all terms of the various agreements and to determine whether it has any objections to them, the

Administrative Law Judge will make a determination as to whether a contested case hearing is necessary to develop an evidentiary record on any factual issues disputed by ECC.

3. Another prehearing status conference will take place by telephone at 11:00 a.m. on April 19, 2006. You must call 651-284-3547 and enter code "0419" when asked for the meeting number.

Dated this 15th day of March, 2006.

s/Kathleen D. Sheehy

KATHLEEN D. SHEEHY
Administrative Law Judge